

Sean Masterson does more than magic

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You wouldn't expect to hear a magician talking about outer space and kids literature, but Sean Masterson has a unique way of engaging audiences of all ages.

"A lot of the magic comes in the form of stories," Masterson explained. "There's a little scenario about Mars, black holes and the sun." Another scenario involves a puppet ghost from the past. "He has several books that first graders are familiar with -- James and the Giant Peach, Charlotte's Web and Charlie and the Chocolate Factory," the magician said. "He does magic with those books and a volunteer."

Your family can experience that intriguing blend during Masterson's "Vaudeville Magic Show," 7:30 p.m. Friday, 7 p.m. Saturday and 3 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 6-8, at The Actors Gymnasium, 927 Noyes St., Evanston. Tickets are \$10 (\$5 for any child who participates in a \$45 "Magic Mystery Workshop," 3-5 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 7). Purchase tickets at brownpapertickets.com or at the door.

"Some of the younger kids get pulled in with the stories," Masterson said. "And then I try to make the magic deceptive enough so that the adults are amazed as well."

For details, see mastersonmagic.com.

Bear with Karen

The cuddly teddy bear will be saluted in song at "Teddy & Friends Hootenanny," 10:30-11 a.m. Thursday, Nov. 12, at Northbrook Public Library, 1201 Cedar Lane. Kids ages 3 and older are invited to bring their teddy bear or other favorite stuffed animal for this sing-along led by Karen Jordan.

For details, call (847) 272-6224.

In the center ring...

Strength, creativity and self-esteem are some of the fringe benefits your 2- to 3-year-old will get out of participating with you in Parent-Tot Circus, 9:30-10:10 a.m. Thursdays or 10-10:40 a.m. Saturdays, Nov. 12, 2009-Jan. 23, 2010, at the Actors Gymnasium, 927 Noyes St., Evanston. Cost is \$135 for this circus-themed class.

For details, call (847) 328-2795.

Gotta dance

Life is dull for young people in a small town until Ren arrives in "Footloose," at Devonshire Playhouse Youth Theatre, 4400 Greenwood, Skokie, 7 p.m. Saturdays and 3 p.m. Sundays, through Nov. 22. Ren came from a big city where dancing is a popular teen activity and he can't understand why it's banned in his new hometown-so he does something about it. Tickets are \$10, \$8 for students and seniors.

For details, call (847) 674-1500, ext. 2400.

Dreamy concert

Adults and children respond to the sounds of the Traveler's Dream Music Group. The multi-instrumentalists, with Celtic, French-Canadian and early American musical roots, will

perform 2-3:30 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 8, at Deerfield Public Library, 920 Waukegan Road. The group has appeared at folk concerts and international festivals.

For details, call (847) 945-3311.

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